

# Welcome To Your Library

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The Rosemary Garfoot Public Library was founded in 1964, thanks to the work of a dedicated group of citizens who undertook much of the fundraising, organizing, and planning to build a library for our community. The library was founded with an \$800 contribution from the Village of Cross Plains, as well as over \$1340 raised through the Community Chest and a fundraising dance. The library was originally located in the grocery store, although it soon found a more permanent home in the municipal building. In 1966, the library moved to its current location on Julius Street, into the old Park School building. In 2006, the current building—Wisconsin’s first LEED certified public library—was built on the same site, with an expanded footprint of 16,000 square feet, including two smaller meeting rooms and a large Community Room that is available for public use.



## About the Strategic Planning Process

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The library’s previous strategic plan expired in 2023. A new director was hired in June of 2023, so the strategic planning process was delayed a year to give the incoming director time to meet and learn more about the community. The library conducted a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Achievements, and Results) survey with the library board and library staff in January and February 2024. The results of this survey were discussed at the February Library Board meeting. This discussion was led by Shawn Brommer, strategic plan consultant with South Central Library System.

Following this discussion, a more concise community survey was created by Library Director, Elizabeth Clauss, and Assistant Director, Kelly McKewin. This survey was posted on April 1 and remained live through the first part of May. Responses were collected through links on library and village websites, social media, and newsletters, as well as through paper forms available at the library. The library also had a table set up on April 2 to collect feedback from community members coming to the library for Election Day, as well as at the Village Annual Meeting on April 25. Both of these were efforts to reach community members who may not be current or frequent library users. The library board, Shawn Brommer, and Elizabeth Clauss discussed the results of the survey at the May board meeting, and a draft of the strategic plan was presented at the August board meeting.

The data compiled for the 2025-2029 strategic plan includes service data from 2023 as reported for the Department of Public Instruction's Annual Report, as well as 5-year estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey in 2022. The data used was the most current available at the time this plan was created.

## Mission Statement

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The Rosemary Garfoot Public Library serves the community through provision of materials and services designed to create a community of life-long learners. The library provides access to materials in a variety of formats to meet the educational, recreational and information needs of the citizens in a manner reflective of the resource base.

The Rosemary Garfoot Public Library provides free and open access to information and the universe of ideas to a diverse and inclusive community. By connecting people to the transformative power of knowledge, the library advances literacy, guides life-long learning and inspires curiosity and creativity.

The library encourages activities that promote stewardship of our environment through promotion of the facility as a living laboratory, provision of environmental and ecological collections, and development of environmentally inspired practices, programs and workshops.

To fulfill this mission, the library promotes an interest in reading by providing leisure reading and other materials for persons of all ages. The library encourages self-development through provision of access to information resources in a variety of formats and through access to a diverse selection of technologies. The library serves the community by providing answers to their informational needs and serves the citizens by providing exceptional customer service.

## Our Community

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Our community includes the Village of Cross Plains, the Town of Berry, and the Town of Cross Plains.

Additionally, as a member of the South Central Library System, we share resources and welcome visitors and circulation from residents of Green, Dane, Sauk, Colombia, Wood, Adams, and Portage Counties.

Additionally, we have reciprocal borrowing agreements with most other library systems in the state of Wisconsin.



# Meet Our Community

## Number of people whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level

### Age group

Under 18 years	<b>75</b> 3.7% of 2,034
35 to 64 years	<b>50</b> 1.3% of 3,792
65 years and over	<b>35</b> 2.1% of 1,694
18 to 34 years	<b>64</b> 4.9% of 1,307

Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates for Census Tracts 129 & 130 in Dane County, Wisconsin (Subject Tables S1702).

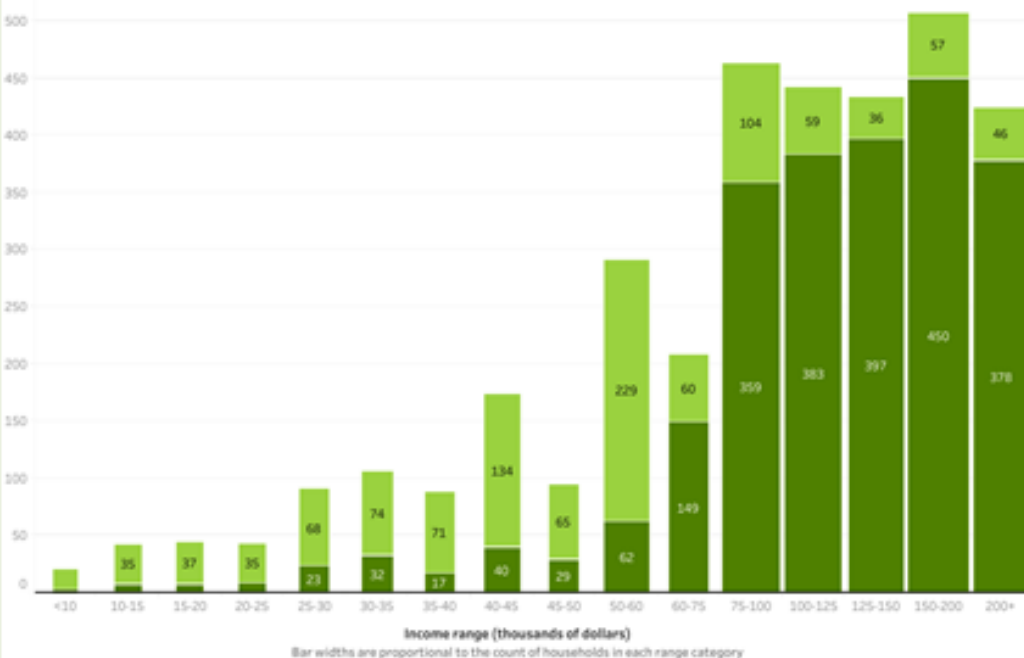
The Rosemary Garfoot Public Library's service area includes the Village of Cross Plains, as well as the Towns of Berry and Cross Plains. 39.1% of Village residents, or 1,908 residents, have library cards. The townships have an 18.1% membership rate, or 725 cardholders. To increase membership we will need to find ways to meet future members out in the community and to engage with them there, rather than to wait for them to come to us.

Our community is less diverse than many of our surrounding communities. Almost 95% of residents are white, per the U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey. Regardless, we need to offer a variety of programs and make sure we are offering collections, programming, and services for all members of our community, both for those who

belong to those groups and to provide a window into the lived experiences of other cultures and groups. While less than .5% of households speak languages other than English as their primary language and just 3% of households immigrated from other countries, providing access to resources and materials in languages other than English would still be an important step in welcoming and serving these populations.

## Household Income Distribution

Number of Family and Nonfamily Households



Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates for Census Tracts 129 & 130 in Dane County, Wisconsin (Data Profiles DP03, DP05; Detailed Tables S19001, S19101, S19201).

## Total Households

**3,472**

## Household Income Statistics

	Median	Mean
All households	\$104,739	\$133,949
Family households	\$128,337	\$160,390
Nonfamily households	\$51,178	\$74,078

## Population

**8,880**

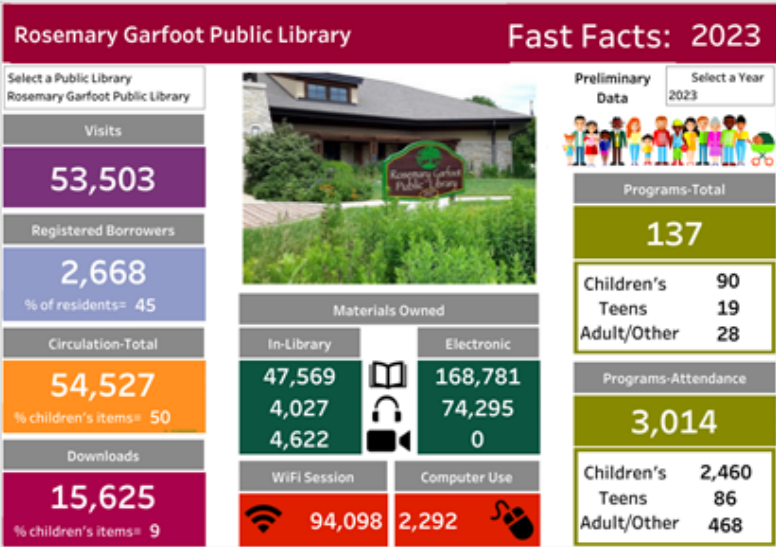
## Per capita income

**\$53,761**

Cross Plains also remains primarily inhabited by home owners rather than renters, as only about 20% of residents are renters. However, as with much of Dane County, the cost of living has increased substantially, leaving over 35% of renters either cost burdened or extremely cost burdened by the price of rent. More affordable housing continues to be a struggle here as elsewhere in the county, especially for the 2.6% of our population that is living below the poverty line.

Finally, Cross Plains has a high level of education attainment amongst its residents, as well as a relatively high average household income. Only 1% of residents do not have a high school diploma, with over 50% of residents having at least some college education.

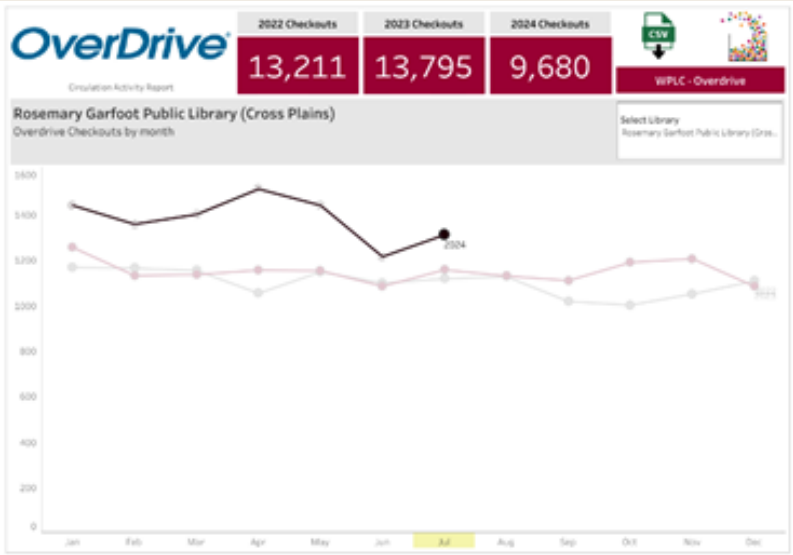
# Service Data



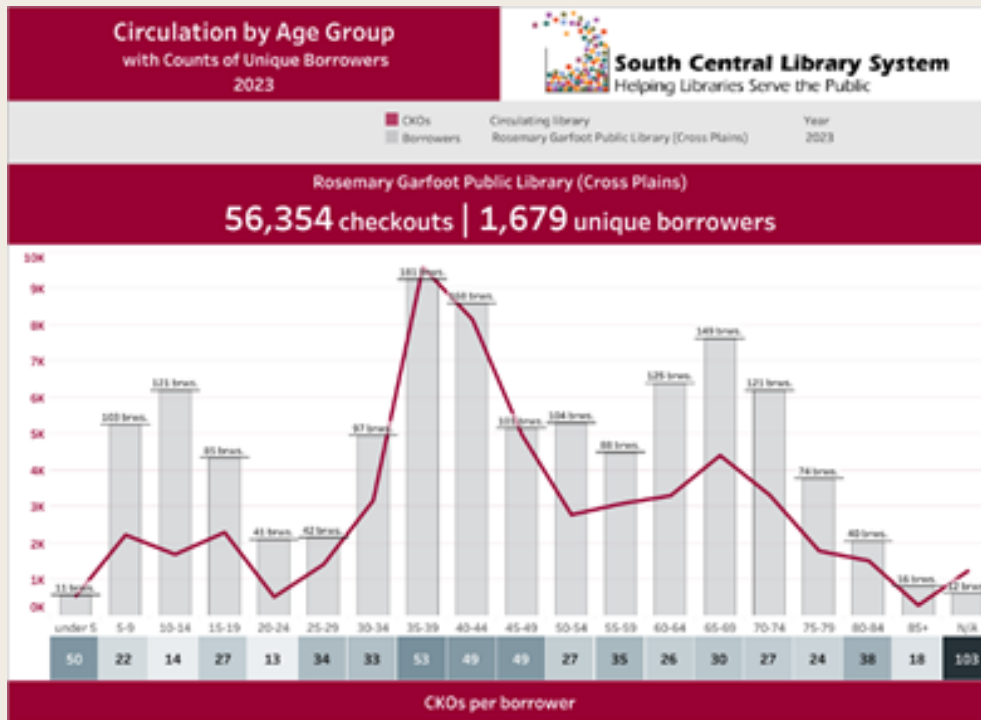
In 2023, the library had 2,668 registered borrowers. They visited our library more than 53,500 times and checked out 54,527 pieces of physical material, as well as 15,625 digital downloads through Wisconsin's Digital Library. Fully half of the physical items circulated at the Rosemary Garfoot Public Library in 2023 were children's materials, showing a strong focus on early literacy in our community. The

library also offered 137 programs in 2023, with 3,014 people attending them. Additionally, the library circulates digital materials through Wisconsin's Digital Library.

Circulation of ebooks and digital audiobooks has increased by 200-300 checkouts per month over 2023's digital circulation. More than half of the digital circulation is for digital audiobooks, showing a shift away from audiobooks with discs or Playaways and a move towards a more portable digital format. Investing in access to digital resources, or reallocating current budget lines towards digital formats, will be an important focus for future planning and budgeting.



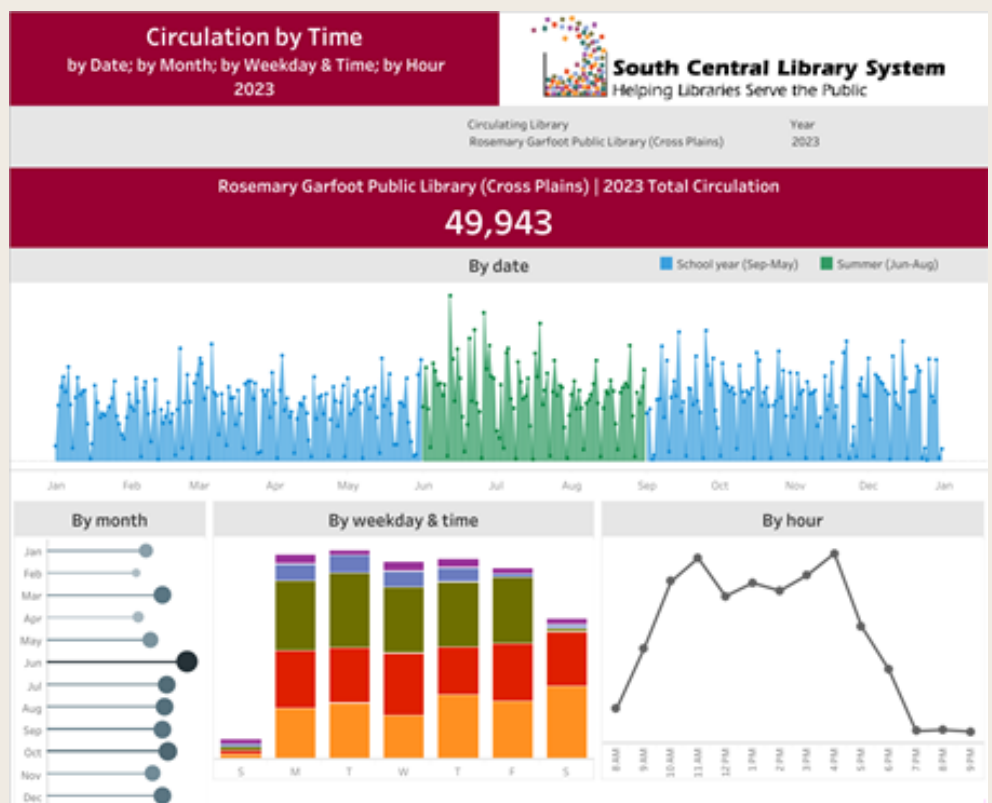
# Library Use



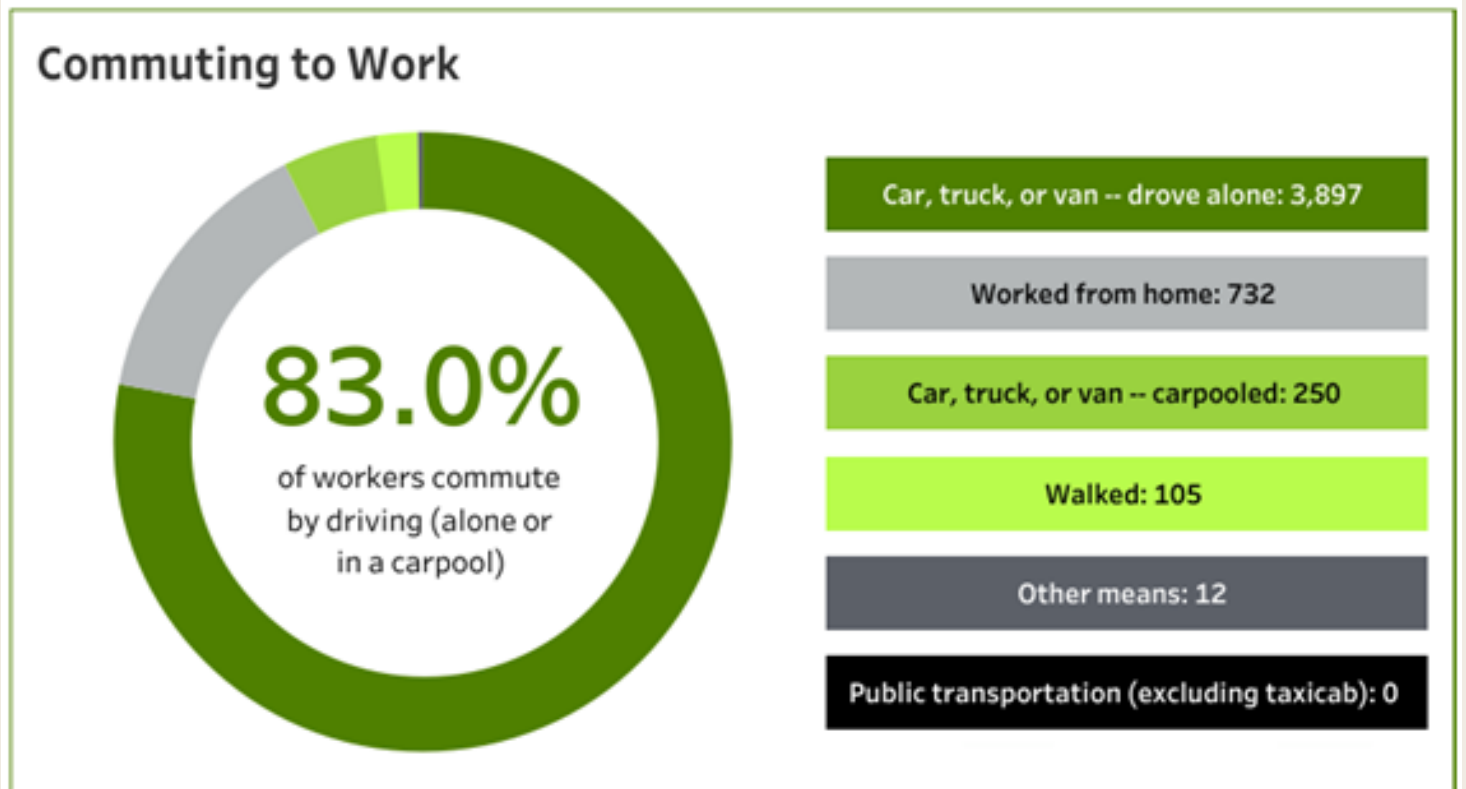
Circulation has rebounded following emergency library closures and reduced services during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Year-to-date circulation for 2024 shows a large increase over 2023's circulation, an encouraging trend to see. Our most dedicated borrowers tend to be between the ages of 30-44, likely many parents and families among them.

Circulation remains strong, and is nearly as high, for cardholders between the ages of 45 and 74, showing that community members of all ages and stages of life value lifelong learning and the materials they have access to through our library.

Unsurprisingly, circulation spikes in June with the start of the Summer Reading Program and remains high through August. Notably, circulation remains fairly steady throughout the rest of the year, with a temporary drop in late December, which slowly picks back up as we head towards March. The library can look at adjusting programming and other initiatives to encourage more library use during these quieter times of year.



Our busiest times of day tend to be late morning—around 11am—and between 4 and 5pm. According the 2022 American Community Survey, nearly 80% of our community commutes to work, helping to explain the circulation spike during the evening commute. These busier times of day are fairly consistent through the week and can help us tailor our programming to times that we already have more traffic to increase engagement and program participation.

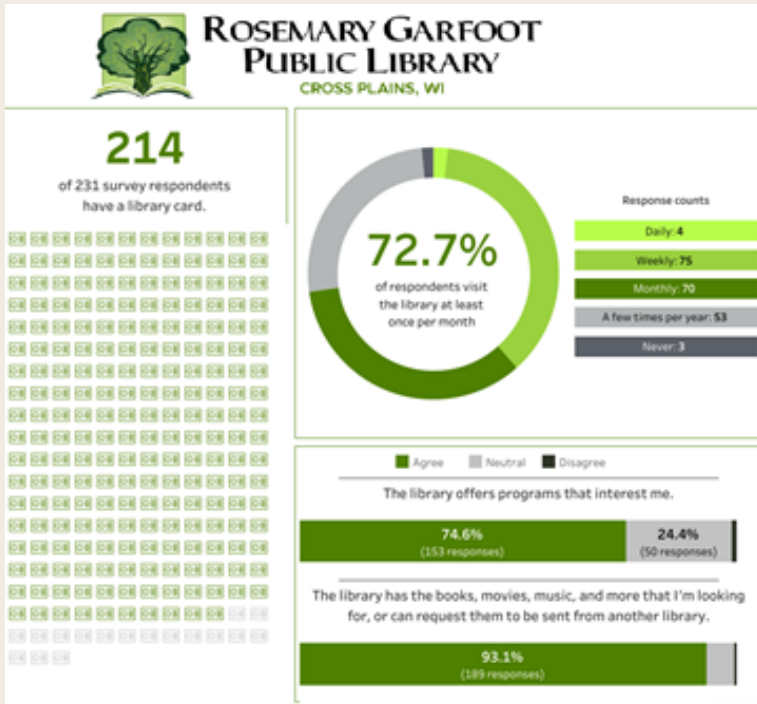


Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates for Census Tracts 129 & 130 in Dane County, Wisconsin (Data Profiles DP05).

## Community Survey

In the late winter and early spring of 2024, the library conducted surveys to learn more about what our community wants and needs from their library. This process began with an in-depth SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Achievements, Results) survey for library staff and board members. The results of this survey helped guide the creation of the community survey, which opened to the public on April 1.

We had 231 responses to our community survey, and 214 of respondents had library cards. Having the survey available at the library on Election Day and at the Village Annual Meeting helped us get more feedback from non-library users, which helped us figure out where the library needs to change and grow to attract future members.



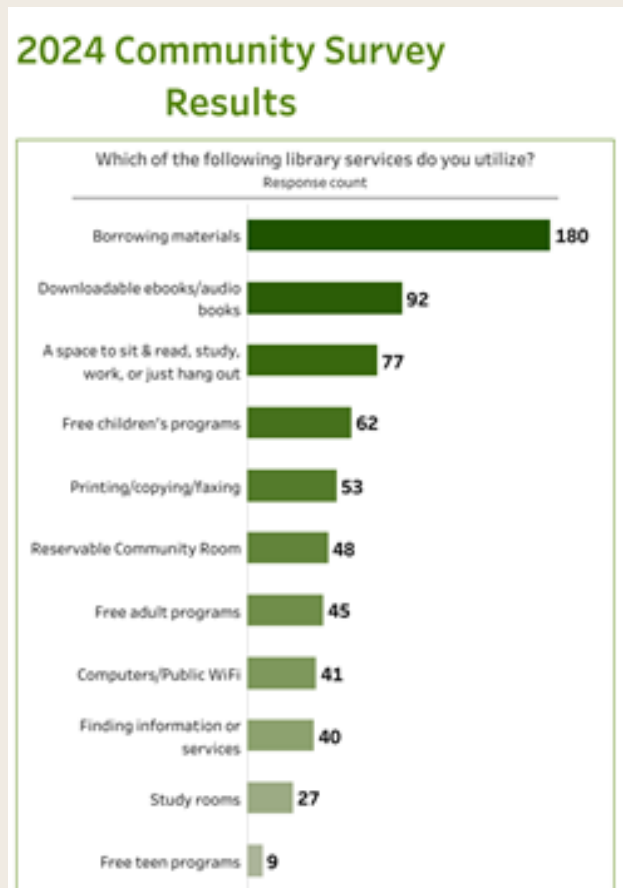
Of those who have a library card, 72.7% visit the library at least once per month, showing that the library is an important destination and community asset for current users. Among those who are not monthly visitors, all but three respondents use the library at least a few times per year.

The library collection remains a core part of the services we provide for our community. 93.1% of respondents said that the library provides access to the materials they are looking for, and the

collection was far and away the most popularly utilized services we provide to our community. Also notable is the use of the library as a space, either for organized meetings or for our community members to just come and study, read, or spend time. Knowing that this is one of the top three services our community uses and appreciates means that we need to focus on retaining the spaces we have, and also look to creatively create new spaces within the library to support this service in our community

Finally, computer, printer, fax, and internet use are also one of the most popular services provided to our community. Per the 2022 US Census Bureau's Community Survey, 6.3% of households in our service area do not have internet access. In a world increasingly reliant on technology, providing access to the internet, and the devices our community can use to access it, must remain an essential part of our service model.

Programming also is one of our core services. 74.6% of respondents find our programming relevant. While encouraging to know that we are providing meaningful programs for many in our community, we also need to continue assessing the programming we're offering to figure out what we are missing in terms of variety, diversity, and topics. Promoting programs is also an important piece of this puzzle and would also help us reach more of the community with our lifelong learning and community building goals.



# Rosemary Garfoot Public Library Strategic Plan 2025-2029

## Goal

Rosemary Garfoot Public Library is an integral part of the village and community life. As our community continues to grow and change, the library will adapt and grow along with it by engaging with the community to offer a wider range of services, resources, and information.

## Objectives

- Community members will be aware of services and programs offered by the Rosemary Garfoot Public Library.
- The library will find ways to foster community connections through programming, the usage of our space, and providing a place for organizations to meet.

## Activities

- The library will create a marketing plan by 12/31/24.
- The library will connect with other community agencies & organizations that serve community members.
- The library will increase outreach services to engage with the community outside of the library building and to reach people who may not otherwise use library services.
- The library will offer a post-program survey to learn more about how attendees learned about the program.
- We will continue to reconfigure our space to provide more seating areas or spots to facilitate socializing, working, or other ways for community members to connect with each other.
- The library will work with other community organizations and groups to provide new outlets for community members to learn about things happening in our community and a way for them to get involved.



## Goal

The library connects our community to materials, resources, and information.

## Objective

The library will evaluate our collection.

## Activities

- Library staff will weed library collections by 12/31/25 to get collections updated, and will begin and maintain a consistent weeding schedule by 1/1/2026.
- The library will increase access to digital materials and resources.
- The library will investigate and implement new resource options to provide access to information both within and outside the library building.

## Goal

The library provides programs that are relevant and of interest to our community.

## Objective

The library will increase program participation by 12/31/25.

## Activities

- The library will increase the number of programs offered in the evening or on weekends to make them more accessible to all members of the community.
- The responses from the community survey for this strategic plan will be used to guide future programming choices, and the library will routinely offer a survey to learn more about what is of interest to our community.

# Appendix I

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Resources consulted in the creation of this strategic plan:

- 2023 Wisconsin Public Library Service Data
- 2024 Cross Plains Community Survey
- Cross Plains Library History by Anita Saeman
- Rosemary Garfoot Public Library Board Meeting Minutes
- SOAR Survey for Library Staff and Library Board Members
- South Central Library System's LinkCAT library catalog
- U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey in 2022

South Central Library System consultant Shawn Brommer, aided in the creation of the plan and Tim Drexler created the graphs used in the Meet Our Community portion of this strategic plan.

# Appendix II

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## **SOAR Survey for Library Board and Library Staff**

### STRENGTHS

- What makes you proud of your library?
- Of what achievement in the last two years are you most proud?
- And how do these points of pride reflect your library's greatest STRENGTHS?
- What are your library's greatest assets?
- Reflecting on the library's STRENGTHS and ASSETS, what do these strengths indicate about your library's capabilities?

### OPPORTUNITIES

- What are the OPPORTUNITIES that you would like to focus on for your library?(Identify the top three from your list.)
- How can the library best meet the needs of community members?
- What skills or resources does the library need to move forward?

### ASPIRATIONS

- What kind of library do you want? What are the most important attributes or essential components?
- If you could wave a magic wand and accomplish 3 – 5 things to strengthen the health and vitality of your organization, what would they be?
- Imagine that it's now 2 – 3 years in the future and your library and community have a thriving productive relationship. What does this look like? What steps were critical to making this happen?

### RESULTS

- You can also think of the results as ACHIEVEMENTS that your library has achieved and that you'd like to see it achieve in the future.
- What are some key accomplishments that have already resulted in successful library programs, services, partnerships, facilities, etc.? What did it feel like?
- How have you traditionally measured achievement and/or success? How might you measure it in the future?
- What are some areas of library service that you might like to work on or enhance upon based on today's conversation?

### FINAL THOUGHTS

Other thoughts/Ideas to remember?

# Appendix III

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## **Community Survey (Future Library Member)**

Help us plan the future of the Rosemary Garfoot Public Library by letting us know how you use (or don't use) the library.

- Do you have a library card?
  - Yes
  - No
- Why don't you use the library?
  - They don't have the books, movies, or music I'm looking for.
  - Hours/location isn't convenient.
  - The programs aren't interesting to me.
  - Not sure--I should start! How do I sign up for a library card?
  - Other (please specify)
- What could the library offer that would make you want to utilize it?
- If you'd like us to follow up about any of your answers or requests for service, please leave us your name and email/phone number below.

Thank you for helping shape the future of the Rosemary Garfoot Public Library and our community!

# Appendix IV

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## Community Survey (library members)

Help us plan the future of the Rosemary Garfoot Public Library by letting us know how you use (or don't use) the library.

- Do you have a library card?
  - Yes
  - No
- How often do you visit us?
  - Daily
  - Weekly
  - Monthly
  - A few times per year
  - Never
- Which of the following library services do you utilize?
  - Borrowing materials
  - Downloadable e-books/audio books
  - Free children's Programs
  - Free teen programs
  - Free adult programs
  - A space to sit and read, study, work, or just hang out
  - Study rooms
  - Reservable Community Room
  - Finding information or services
  - Computers/Public wi-fi
  - Printing/copying/faxing
- The library offers programs that interest me.
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
- The library has the books, music, movies, and more that I'm looking for.
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
- What service(s) would you like to see the library offer our community?
- Which services or programs that the library currently offers do you use or find the most helpful?
- Anything else you'd like to share with us?
- If you'd like us to follow up about any of your answers or requests for service, please leave us your name and email/phone number below.

Thank you for helping shape the future of the Rosemary Garfoot Public Library and our community!

# Appendix V

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## Comments from the Community Survey

### What else would you like to see the library do or offer?

- More family programs for parents and little kids during non-work hours. We enjoyed the tent night so much!
- Hoopla is a fun app but might be too expensive. Love having Libby.
- More teen and adult programming offerings- cooking classes, craft classes, teen book club, yoga for adults
- Continue offering more programs and support within the community.
- More arts and craft programs? Maybe advertise better so more people know about all your services?
- I think coffee work/study days/nights would be cool!
- More art programs and yoga for adults after school hours
- Not sure at this time, but hope those programs currently offered continue
- Continue with emails of monthly events and reminders of upcoming events.
- Private study rooms. I used to try to come in to work, but it's often too noisy.
- Open more hours
- More clubs/activities for adults and older kids
- Game board nights for families
- Later open hours, more adult programs
- Crafting classes for adults
- More community and adult programs such as speakers on various topics and activities--art/craft/yoga/meditation related
- The art displays
- more books for young children
- I'd like some writing workshops or something of the sort!
- Maybe community program with computers for seniors!
- Continuing children's program, update playground, kids crafting/activities
- Read aloud program for ages 8-11
- Outreach at community events
- Kids movie programs, kids/adult reading challenges, more wonderbooks kid options, elementary age book club
- More community space, special programs/events
- Classes/clubs for young adults/adults that meet once every 1-2 weeks
- Cooking classes

# Appendix V (Continued)

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## What else would you like to see the library do or offer? (Continued)

- More search and find around the library kid activities, kid take home activities with prizes, kid programs on weekends.
- Small groups like Lego club, creative writing classes, and art classes for elementary-aged kids
- Chess club, more programming for middle schoolers. Perhaps a volunteer program for middle schoolers.
- It would be nice if there was a self-checkout option where if you reserve material, you can retrieve it from a shelf and scan it yourself. The library in Deforest had a system similar to this. I'm a bit anti-social so the less contact with people I have the better off.
- Maybe more programs for families or parents/ children that work for kids with disabilities, programs for adults that accommodate different schedules
- More children's programming
- More kids programs or group activities during the week days
- I really would like to see more public forums with our representatives. I also would like to see more classes where you can get introduced to new hobbies or information sharing in current topics
- Tool/Household item rental
- I would appreciate a cart for pre-schools/childcare facilities to use in order to collect books and take them to their vehicles. When collecting 30-40 books it becomes difficult to carry them.
- Lend items like electric leaf blowers, any alternative earth friendly power tool, fishing poles and lures, seeds for planting, tablets for reading, etc...
- More DnD programs, increased service opportunities
- Hold music programs besides kid shows. Perhaps invite MHS or UW ensemble to play outside or inside; jam sessions for local players, etc. lectures/demos, guest artists
- Admission to some area museums, state park passes. When we lived in Denver they had this and it was so fun! (You'd check out a backpack with maps and the pass, so there was a limit)
- I think it would be beneficial to move the books and stuff out of the study room. It's first come first serve yet I had to move study rooms because someone needed to leave because of the noise level. Very distracting.
- Not doing anything more per se but making sure that the community know that opportunities exist
- Programs on cell phones. Computer basics

# Appendix V (Continued)

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## **What could the library offer that would make you want to utilize it?**

- More activities for children/toddlers
- Public seminars on topics, like finance, legal, DNR, nature, WI history tie to books with more info.
- Monthly weekend story time for infant/toddler aged children.
- Any fun kids activities for stay at home mom's with infants & toddlers
- Social media to post updates on current activities that are going on.

## **Why don't you use the library?**

- The programs aren't interesting to me.
- They don't have the books, movies, or music I'm looking for.
- Hours/location isn't convenient.